

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application. Please cancel claims 3 and 15, and amend claims 1 and 14 as follows:

**Listing of Claims:**

1. (currently amended) A fuel injector comprising:
    - a nozzle body having a needle valve for opening and closing an injection port, and
    - a tubular sleeve portion having a straight portion with a constant inner diameter;
    - a first cylindrical member disposed within said tubular sleeve portion;
    - a second cylindrical member disposed within said tubular sleeve portion, said second cylindrical member is adjacent to said first cylindrical member;
    - a third cylindrical member disposed within said straight portion of the tubular sleeve portion, wherein said second cylindrical member abuts and is on an injection port side of said third cylindrical member and said third cylindrical member is a separating plate;
    - a fourth cylindrical member disposed within said tubular sleeve portion, said fourth cylindrical member contains therein at least a portion of a plunger for pressurizing fuel; and
    - wherein a gap formed between an outer circumference of the third cylindrical member and an inner circumference of the tubular sleeve portion, is smaller than a gap formed between an outer circumference of the second or fourth cylindrical members and the inner circumference of the tubular sleeve portion,
- wherein cutaways are formed in an outer circumference of said third cylindrical member, said cutaways being formed by communicating apertures at an upper face of said third cylindrical member to apertures at a lower face of said third cylindrical member.

2-8. (canceled)

9. (previously presented) The fuel injector of claim 1, wherein the second and third cylindrical members are formed as one piece.

10. (previously presented) The fuel injector of claim 1, wherein the third and fourth cylindrical members are formed as one piece.

11. (previously presented) The fuel injector of claim 1, wherein an outer circumference of said third cylindrical member has a constant outer diameter.

12. (previously presented) The fuel injector of claim 1, wherein a gap formed between an outer circumference of the third cylindrical member and an inner circumference of the tubular sleeve portion, is smaller than a gap formed between an outer circumference of the second cylindrical member and the inner circumference of the tubular sleeve portion.

13. (previously presented) The fuel injector of claim 1, wherein said third cylindrical member is a separating plate between an injection mechanism and a pressure increasing mechanism.

14. (currently amended) The fuel injector of claim [[3]] 1, wherein said cutaways are used as drain passages for leaking fuel.

15. (canceled)